



NEWS RELEASE

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Rel. No. 5-9-2006
May 4, 2006

MANHATTAN, FORT RILEY TRIATHLETES WIN OVERALL

By Mike Heronemus
Editor

About 65 triathletes braved cool and damp weather to compete in Fort Riley's Splashin' Dash Triathlon April 29. Fort Riley competitors won all three-person team and overall female categories, and a Manhattan, Kan., resident took top overall male honors.

Fort Riley's Virginia Lee posted a time of 0:39:37 to be the fastest female competitor. She competed in the 30- to 40-year-old female category.

Ric Rosenkranz finished the course in 0:33:30 for top male honors.

Father Ron Lysinger, daughter Rebecca and son Ronnie combined their performances on one of the three legs of the race to win the co-ed team under 100 years combined age category with a time of 0:53:34.

The 4th Battalion, 1st Field Artillery, team of Patrick Henson, Matthew Offiler and Kevin Mills finished the course in 0:44:48 to win the male team under 100 years combined age category.

The Medical Department Activity team of Ian Lee, Chris Lowry and Mark Ochoa finished in 0:38:39 to win the male team over 100 years combined age category.

The race required contestants to swim a serpentine 300-meter course in Eyster Pool on Custer Hill, then ride a bike over 7.2 miles of post roads, including Kitty Drive and 1st Division Road on Custer Hill, down Caisson Hill Road from Ellis Heights housing area past the hospital, southwest along Huebner Road to Seitz Drive and then the short distance along that street to Riley's Conference Center.

From the transition point at Riley's, competitors ran a 2-mile course across the grounds surrounding Riley's, ending up almost where they started on the circuitous running trail.

"I really liked it," said Kansas State University freshman Eric Schroeder. "The weather could have been better, but you can't do anything about that," he said.

Schroeder was competing in his second triathlon. His first was last year's Manhattan triathlon, and he said that race got him hooked on the sport. "I plan to do five or six more this summer," he said.

Fellow K-State freshman Ben Hollon said the relatively flat course made for fast times, especially the bike route, much of which went downhill.

Even though both triathletes judged the course "easy," Schroeder admitted he was hurting physically during part of the course, even though he had been training about three times a week in preparation.

"You hurt while you're doing it, but it really feels good when you're done," he added.

Eleven-year-old Rebecca Lysinger didn't train for the triathlon. The only preparation she had was a familiarization drive along the bike course with her dad the night before.

For a while, "I didn't think I could finish," she said. The few hills on Kitty Drive were tough, she said, but "when I got by the hospital, I said, 'OK, I'm going to make it,' and I started to push myself."

Her 13-year-old brother, Ronnie, runs the 800-meter in track at Flint Hills Christian school, father Ron said. Ronnie handled the 2-mile run for the winning family team who hadn't thought about entering until wife and mother, Rhonda, told them she had signed them up.

Fort Riley hasn't sponsored a triathlon for several years, said Jim Westerhaus, sports director on post. He said he was pleased with the turnout April 29 and even took a souvenir photo of Bob Webster and his daughter, Melinda, who drove from Pryor, Okla., to compete in the Splashin' Dash.

"This was my first triathlon," admitted Melinda. Her father hadn't competed in a triathlon for about eight to 10 years, he said.

Neither had trained for the race, but seemed satisfied with their accomplishment.

"I finished it," said Melinda with a beaming smile.